



1600 9th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 654-2309

November 16, 2004

Dear Stakeholder:

On November 2, 2004 the voters of California passed Proposition 63, the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). The MHSA has the potential to significantly change the delivery of mental health services in this State. There is significant additional funding set aside to achieve the following goals:

- To define mental illness as a condition deserving priority attention, including prevention and early intervention services and medical and supportive care.
- To reduce the long-term adverse impact resulting from untreated serious mental illness.
- To expand successful, innovative service programs including culturally and linguistically competent approaches for underserved populations.
- To provide funds to adequately meet the need of all who can be identified and enrolled.
- To ensure that funds are expended in most cost effective manner and services are provided in accordance with recommended best practices with oversight to ensure accountability.

It is our objective and obligation to achieve these goals in each and every county in California.

To successfully complete an undertaking of this magnitude will require thoughtful, deliberative and extensive planning. It is essential that our implementation strategies and programs are well thought out and contribute to the transformation of our public mental health system to a more accessible, responsible, accountable program driven by outcomes and what works. Therefore, we are requesting your partnership in developing and designing strategies to implement MHSA. DMH is committed to having multiple methods for obtaining stakeholder input. To facilitate this input, we will develop and disseminate draft documents as a starting point to initial discussion on the issues and policy. Through meetings, written comments, Internet and oral communications, we want the broadest stakeholder participation feasible to inform our final decisions.

In addition to statewide planning the MHSA requires local planning and provides funding for that planning. DMH is in the process of preparing documents, laying out the requirements for local programs to request funding, the proposed distribution of that funding and a statement of intent. A draft of these documents will be distributed in November and will be posted on our website, [www.dmh.ca.gov](http://www.dmh.ca.gov). After dissemination of these documents, a

stakeholder meeting will be convened on Friday, December 17, from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Department of Social Services' Auditorium, 744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814 to obtain feedback and input to shape the final local planning requirement efforts. It is important that at this time, local planning reflect the agreed upon principles and requirements and, hence, should not supercede this process.

As stated earlier, DMH will also accept comments in writing at the following address:

Carol Hood, Deputy Director  
Mental Health Services Act  
California Department of Mental Health  
1600 9<sup>th</sup> Street, Room 130  
Sacramento, California 95814  
FAX 916-653-9194

We have also established a centralized e-mail address, [mhsa@dmh.ca.gov](mailto:mhsa@dmh.ca.gov), where you can send comments or raise questions regarding the initiative. E-mails received at this address will be forwarded to the appropriate person within DMH for consideration and for the development of a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document which will be posted on our website.

DMH will continue to develop a variety of draft documents for input. We expect to have additional drafts ready for stakeholder input in early January. We will post regular updates on our web site, [www.dmh.ca.gov](http://www.dmh.ca.gov). We will develop training and other strategies to support stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the MHSA. We will provide information about some of these opportunities in the very near future and a more comprehensive summary in the coming weeks.

The implementation of the MHSA continues to evolve. We're trying to establish timeframes that are consistent with the expectation to transform the mental health system through the MHSA in partnership with stakeholders. We expect to stagger the implementation of various elements of the MHSA while moving toward the vision of a fully integrated local Program and Expenditure Plan. We request your assistance throughout the process.

Sincerely,

*Original signed by John Rodriguez for*

STEPHEN W. MAYBERG, Ph.D.  
Director